

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO DEA HQS WASHDC

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 4948

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 10025

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR

SUBJ: DEA PERSONNEL IN LAOS

HQS PASS DURKIN/EN; CUSACK/EOI; BELK/IG FROM ADDARIO

REF : VIENTIANE 3878 301233Z MAY 75

1. THE BANGKOK REGIONAL OFFICE REQUESTS THAT DEA MAINTAIN AN OFFICE IN LAOS. NARCOTIC ENFORCEMENT CONTINUES TO BE A HIGH PRIORITY MATTER FOR THE U.S. GOVERNMENT. THE PRESENCE OF DEA OVERSEAS AND PARTICULARLY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA HAS RECENTLY BECOME INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT WITH THE INCREASED TRAFFICKING BETWEEN SOUTHEAST ASIA, EUROPE AND THE U.S. THERE ARE MANY FUNCTIONS PERFORMED BY DEA REPRESENTATIVES INCLUDING ENFORCEMENT, LIAISON, GATHERING STRATEGIC AND TACTICAL DRUG INTELLIGENCE AND COORDINATION OF NARCOTIC RELATED INFORMATION ON A WORLD WIDE BASIS. THE RAPIDLY CHANGING POLICIES OF PGNU CONCERNING NARCOTICS WOULD INDICATE A NEED FOR DEA EXPERTISE TO INSURE THAT THE U.S. NARCOTIC ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM DOES NOT SUFFER DUE TO LACK OF INFORMATION FROM LAOS.

2. THERE HAS BEEN NO INDICATION TO DATE THAT THE PGNU HAS REQUESTED THE TERMINATION OF DEA ACTIVITIES IN LAOS.

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DEA OPERATIONS ARE TAILORED TO FUNCTION IN ACCORDANCE

WITH POLICIES OF THE RESPECTIVE HOST COUNTRIES. THE OPERATION IN LAOS WOULD CERTAINLY BE SUBJECT TO THE LOCAL SITUATION WITH EMPHASIS ON DRUG INTELLIGENCE AND WORKING AS A CONDUIT OF INFORMATION ON THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL.

3. CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST IN THE INTERDICTION OF NARCOTICS CONTINUES TO RECEIVE A HIGH DEGREE OF ATTENTION. IF FOREIGN AID IS CONTINUED FOR LAOS THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT COOPERATION BY THE PGNU IN NARCOTIC ENFORCEMENT WILL BE CLOSELY SCRUTINIZED BY CONGRESS.

4. THE ABOLISHMENT OF THE NARCOTIC ATTACHE OFFICE AT THIS TIME IS BELIEVED TO BE UNWARRANTED. RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE AT A LATER DATE WOULD PRESENT MANY UNNECESSARY PROBLEMS. MAINTAINING EVEN LIMITED LIAISON AT THIS TIME WOULD BE MORE ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE USG NARCOTIC EFFORT THAN TO LOSE THESE CONTACTS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE.

5. BRO APPRECIATES THE COMMENTS IN REFERENCED MESSAGE BUT BELIEVES THE RATIONALE FOR CLOSING THE DEA OFFICE IS PRIMARILY SPECULATIVE AT THIS TIME.

6. THE BANGKOK REGIONAL OFFICE REQUESTS DEA HQS TO INITIATE DISCUSSIONS WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE TO INSURE A CONTINUED DEA PRESENCE IN LAOS.
WHITEHOUSE

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NNN

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